

Chapter 7
Honoring God and Those He Gives Authority
[*The Fall of the Rebel Angels* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder]

This assignment will confront students with the reality of temptation. Through a lectio divina reflection with Matthew 4:1-11, they will experience how Jesus was tempted and reflect on how temptations might arise in their own lives. First, read Matthew 4:1-11 slowly and prayerfully. Then, share this reflection in your own words:

Pride is the original sin. When Adam and Eve ate the apple, the sin was not so much eating the apple as it was disobeying God, thinking they knew better than God, rebelling against God. There's a famous poem by John Milton, an English poet of the seventeenth century, who puts these words on the devil's lips: "It is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." The devil thought he knew better than God, and he got Adam and Eve to do the same. When the devil tempted Jesus in the desert, he is trying to get Jesus to say that he knows better than God. The temptations say: you should use your power for your own good, rather than that of other people; it is better to be comfortable than to be challenged; it is better to have glory in other people's eyes than to do what is right in God's eyes. Jesus resists these temptations. Are we strong enough to follow his example and do the same?

After this reflection, distribute the Lectio Divina Script. Read through it with your students. Then read the biblical passage one more time and have the students write their personal reflections on a separate sheet of paper

Lectio Divina Script

1. *Lectio*. This Latin word means “reading.” Listen to the scriptural reading. Observe different moments, aspects, moods, and characters in the passage. Make notes about what stands out to you.
2. *Meditatio*. This word means, of course, “meditation” or “reflection.” What stood out to you? Think about this. Does it connect to your life? Could it inspire you to change something in your life or deepen some aspect of your life? Does your reflection raise up with it any questions or remembrances in your mind?
3. *Oratio*. This word means “prayer.” It could also be thought of as your personal *response* to what God has said to you in your time of reflection. Speak with God about what has come up for you – the questions, challenges, and memories. Ask him for help. Pray for those in your life who have come to mind during this time. Thank God for what he has blessed you with and what he might bless you with in future.
4. *Contemplatio*. This word means “contemplation.” Spend some time in the presence of God. Turn over your reflection in your mind again. Does anything jump out at you a second time? Remind yourself of what you prayed for and ask God to stay with you. What do you hear from God? Is he saying anything to you? Breathe deeply. Rest in God’s presence.
5. *Actio*. This word means “action.” This is the step in the process that leads to *conversion*—turning our lives in a new direction, which is what happens when we encounter God. Do you want to be closer to God? How? Do you want to be closer to those around you? How? In other words, now that you’ve had this prayer experience, what are you going to do? Has anything risen up in your heart that could help you live a better or different life? Plan out some steps to make that happen.

